

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02
SS-15 USIA-06 SSM-03 IO-13 EUR-12 ACDA-12 /107 W
-----072315 050708Z /21

R 041208Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBMASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1254
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AAMEMBASSY JIDDA 5588
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 18291

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EG LY
SUBJ: EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN DETENTE

REF (A) CAIRO 17700, (B) TRIPOLI 1387, (C) CAIRO 16574

1. RETURNING FROM VISIT WITH PRESIDENT SADAT TO ROMANIA,
IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA, FOREIGN MINISTRE FAHMY TOLD PRESS
THAT EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONS "MORE NORMAL" AND PROCEEDING
ALONG "PROPER COURSE." STATEMENT HIGHLIGHTS CONTINUING
PUBLIC DETENTE BETWEEN TWO COUNTRIES; PROPOGANDA BOMBAST
HAS BEEN LARGELY STILLED DURING PAST MONTH.

2. IN RECENT CONVERSATIONS WITH MEMBER OF FAHMY'S
IMMEDIATE STAFF HUSSEIN HASSOUNA AND DIRECTOR FOREIGN
MINISTRY'S ARAB AFFAIRS DEPARTMENT AMBASSADOR
IBRAHIM, EMBOFF TOLD "NOT TO BE SURPRISED IF THERE
DRAMATIC IMPROVEMENT IN EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN RELATIONS."
BOTH EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS, IN SEPARATE MEETINGS, MAINTAINED
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BILATERAL RELATIONS BETWEEN TWO STATES HAVE BEEN LARGELY
MENDED AND POINTED TO NOW COMPLETED RETURN OF PRISONERS
AND RESTITUTION OF CONSULATE PROPERTIES AS INDICATIVE
OF THIS CHANGE. BOTH CLAIMED ARAB STATES CAPABLE OF
EFFECTING WIDE RANGING, SUDDEN ALTERNATIONS IN RELATIONS
WITH FRATERNAL COUNTRIES AND POSITED THIS PHENOMENON
ABOUT TO TRANSPIRE BETWEEN EGYPT AND LIBYA. NEITHER

OFFICIAL WAS WILLING OFFER SPECIFICS RE POSSIBLE
IMPROVEMENT IN BILATERAL RELATIONS.

3. RE REF B, EGYPTIAN PRESS HAS NOT PICKED UP KUWAITI
REPORT OF POSSIBLE TRANSFER LIBYAN ARMS; NOR WERE ARAFAT'S
REMARKS ON LIBYA CONSTITUTING STRATEGIC DEPT FOR EGYPT
REPORTED. MOST RECENT CAIRO PRESS COVERAGE OF SOVIET
PRESENCE IN LIBYA (REF C), ARGUED IT RELATED TO
USSR ARMS SUPPLIES FOR ETHIOPIA, NOT EGYPT.

4. COMMENT: GOE LEADERS REMAIN DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS OF
QADHAFI AND IN OUR VIEW, "DRAMATIC" IMPROVEMENT IN BI-
LATERAL RELATIONS ONLY LIKELY IF QADHAFI WERE TO TAKE
SOME POSITIVE CONCRETE ACTION TOWARD EGYPT SUCH AS
TRANSFER OF SUBSTANTIAL MILITARY EQUIPMENT.
EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DETENTE, FOREIGN RELATIONS, PRESS COMMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 04-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO18291
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770408-0318
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19771196/aaaademe.tel
Line Count: 78
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 7888b322-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 CAIRO 17700, 77 TRIPOLI 1387, 77 CAIRO 16574
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01-Feb-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 718091
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: EGYPTIAN/LIBYAN DETENTE
TAGS: PGOV, PROP, EG, LY
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/7888b322-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009